

STATEMENT MADE BY BRUCE BABBITT
August 9, 1983

I would like to brief you on events that have occurred since yesterday.

Last night in Clifton I asked both Phelps Dodge and the striking unions to take a step back, to seek the assistance of a Federal mediator, and to embark upon a 10 day cooling off period.

Phelps Dodge agreed to suspend further hiring of non-union employees and to meet with a mediator.

In exchange, I asked union members to stop blockading the plant gates. Instead, the blockade continued. Confronted with the possibility of still more violence, the plant manager decided to cease operations and close the plant.

I believe that Phelps Dodge acted responsibly in taking actions to avert a confrontation, and deplore the continuing union violence and intimidation.

Similar difficulties are occurring at the Phelps Dodge facility at Ajo. The Company has announced its intention to keep the plant running and has requested law enforcement assistance to keep the plant gates cleared.

The courts in Pima County have issued orders prohibiting obstruction at the gates and harassment of workers. It is my

constitutional obligation to see that the order is enforced.

I have spoken with Sheriff Dupnik and Col. Milstead and assured them that the state will provide whatever backup is necessary to restore law and order.

I urge union members and leaders in Ajo to obey the law, to recognize that violence will only lead to more tragedy, such as the wounding of Chandra Tallant last week.

I am prepared to meet, to mediate, to hear grievances and to act on them. But we cannot allow any further drift into violence and lawlessness.